Michael Parenti: The National Security State at Home and Abroad

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this is radio democracy a series of 12 commentaries by the noted author and political analyst michael parente this segment is titled the national security state at home and abroad how the fbi cia and other agencies suppress dissent and endanger democracy within the government there exists what some have called the national security state it consists of the president the secretaries of state secretary of defense the national security council the joint chiefs of staff which is the military heads of all the various armed forces and numerous intelligence agencies like the cia the fbi and the nsa the national security state often operates like an unaccountable sovereign power of its own its primary function is to defeat political forces that seek alternatives to free market capitalism at home or abroad or even forces that might try to introduce any kind of economically redistributive politics even within the existing capitalist framework u.s national security agencies involve themselves in political repression at home and abroad we often think that the united states is free of the kind of political crimes assassinations and death squads that characterize other countries well think again the us national security agencies ally themselves with criminal elements either looking the other way when thugs and assassins do their dirty business or actively assisting them in third world countries in europe and even in the us when agents of the philippine dictator ferdinand marcos conducted operations against filipino dissidents in the u.s the fbi cooperated with these agents one known fbi informant admitted to having witnessed the murder of two filipino union leaders

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the murder of two filipino union leaders who were prominent in the anti-marcos movement in this country the fbi also cooperated with el salvador security forces supplying them with the names of salvadoran refugees who were about to be deported from the u.s so that the security police could apprehend them upon their return in other words the fbi would give the names to the salvadoran security police many of these refugees had fled to this country in the hope of escaping death and torture salvador and activists in this country have endured assaults kidnappings and numerous car smashings and apartment break-ins with threatening notes left after them and relatives in el salvador threatened by police the u.s police hardly bestowed themselves making no attempts to question right-wing suspects individuals in the cuban-american community who have advocated a more conciliatory policy toward the cuban communist government have been subjected to threats and attacks an anti-socialist cuban exile terrorist group claimed credit for some 21 bombings between 1975 and 1980 they publicly they would leave messages after the bombing and for the murder of a cuban diplomat in new york and yet this group escaped arrest in all but two instances a car bombing in miami that cost a cuban radio news direct of both his legs also remains unsolved likewise three haitian talk show hosts in miami who aired critical commentaries about military repression in haiti were shot dead between 1991 and 93. in the united states between 1981 and 87 there were 11 fatal shootings of vietnamese publishers journalists and activists who had advocated normalized relations with the communist government of vietnam

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communist government of vietnam in each instant a us-based group called vietnamese organization to exterminate communists and restore the nation claimed responsibility one of the group's victims a publisher of vietnamese language weekly survived his shooting and identified the gunman a leader of a vietnamese extortion gang the assailant was convicted but the conviction was reversed at the prosecutor's request the prosecutor because quote he had no prior criminal record in this country so you can murder somebody or attempt to murder somebody and he had no prior criminal record the prosecutor lets you off the police repeatedly claimed that such attacks were unrelated and devoid of a political motive even though all the victims were people who were politically active in the vietnam issue and despite vietnamese organization to exterminate communists despite their communiques claiming responsibility they even claimed they were killing these people for political reasons and yet the u.s police said they could not see a pattern and they didn't really see any political motive the fbi refused to get involved there's the strange case of professor edward cooperman an american who was shot dead while working in his office at california state university fullerton as founder of an organization advocating scientific cooperation with vietnam cooperman had received death threats one lamb van meen a vietnamese emma gray and cooperman's former student admitted witnessing the professor's death and was arrested as mean tells it cooperman produced a gun that accidentally discharged and killed him mean left in a panic taking the gun with him isn't that strange he then took a female friend to a movie after which he returned to cooperman's office and placed the gun in cooperman's hand

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and placed the gun in cooperman's hand this is means testimony the office had the appearance of a struggle which means attorney argued resulted merely from the professor's attempts to get up after being left for dead the prosecution introduced little to dispute means improbable story it was again a very lackadaisical prosecution he was convicted only of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to three years and he served only one year it should be pointed out that mean had been previously arrested for possession of stolen property at which time police found guns and ammunition in his car and home means lawyer was procured by tran mean kong spokesman for the right wing national united front for the liberation of the vietnam a right-wing group that has terrorized vietnamese in 1987 after a bombing that killed a vietnamese language publisher in garden grove california police finally acknowledged the existence of right-wing vietnamese terrorism and officially requested fbi assistance the bureau launched an investigation to determine quote whether a pattern is emerging can you imagine if there were killings by some leftists would they wait for years and years and say there's no pattern other political murders or suspicious deaths in the united states include manuel de dios a reporter and editor who frequently pointed the finger at big drug dealers and money launderers there was alan berg a popular denver talk show host who engaged in impassioned arguments with anti-semitic and racist callers and who was shot by members of a white supremacist group there was don boles who at the time of his murder was involved in an investigation of a far-reaching financial scandal said to implicate some of arizona's most powerful political and business leaders

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political and business leaders there was karen silkwood who was investigating radiation safety negligence at kermage corporation and there was danny casalaro whose investigation of government and business corruption might have implicated high-ranking officials casa lara was judged a suicide even though he was found dead in a hotel room in the bathtub and he was immediately embalmed before any kind of autopsy could be done on him despite the family wanting to investigate and his family argued that he was not at all depressed and was not going to commit suicide didn't like the sight of blood and was very excited about the investigation that he was doing into government and business corruption none of these murders have been thoroughly investigated none of them have been solved in contrast the fbi was quick to make arrests when environmentalist judy barry and daryl cherny was seriously injured by a car bomb in 1990 they acted very quickly they arrested the victims barry and cherny calling them quote radical activists they charge that the bomb must have belonged to them they're carrying it in the car but the bomb didn't blow up in the back it was under the seats where they were driving barry is an outspoken advocate of non-violence the fbi said the

bomb was in the back and the photos show the back of the car was undamaged the explosion was in the front as i said barry her real crime was that she was an outspoken advocate of non-violence and she was an outspoken activist against the timber companies that were stripping and destroying the land the charges were eventually dropped against barry and cherny for total lack of evidence but the fbi named no other suspects and came up with nothing else just don't have a clue as to who could have tried to kill barry and cherny by the way both of them still suffering from disabilities from the bombing neo-nazi skinheads and other rightist

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neo-nazi skinheads and other rightist terrorists have repeatedly been able to commit acts of violence and even publicly claim responsibility without getting caught this means law enforcers have made little effort to monitor and deter their actions unlike the way they monitor legal peaceful groups on the left because if they were monitored if they were under surveillance if they'd been infiltrated their acts of violence would have been stopped and they would have been caught and revealed and prosecuted one would hope again there's nothing inconsistent about this position by the way because left groups no matter how non-violent and how lawful they challenged the corporate system of power money and privilege or some aspect of its abuses while right-wing groups generally do the dirty work for that very same system thus there's a community of interest between the far rightists these little cliques these skinheads and terrorists and the law agencies and often also a community of methods right wingers can get into trouble sometimes when right-wing extremists engage in counterfeiting and bank robberies and plan attacks against police and military bases as part of a war against the government then law and forces may move against them but when they act against individual citizens or progressive people they seem to get away with murder literally making the world safe for free market capitalism is a massive enterprise security agencies expend about an estimated 28 billion to 30 billion dollars yearly on operations at home and abroad congress has no exact idea how much it allocates because uh the funds for intelligence operations are hidden in other budget items and this is in violation of the constitution article 1 section 9 of which reads no money shall be drawn from the treasury but in consequences of appropriations made by law and a regular statement account of receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published

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money shall be published from time to time and in fact that is not at all done with security agencies of the various units of the national security state the central intelligence agency or cia is the most widely known probably because of its extensive covert actions throughout the world in addition there's the pentagon's national security agency ensa created in 1952 by president truman in an executive order that has remained secret to this day nsa's mission is to break codes and monitor nearly all telephone calls and telegrams between the united states and other countries and a great deal of domestic telephone traffic they do it all through these satellites there's the pentagon defense intelligence agencies the dia which deals with military espionage and counterintelligence around the world there's the state department's bureau of intelligence and research there's the fbi's counterintelligence program within the pentagon itself every echelon be it the office of the secretary of defense the army navy air force or the regional commands around the globe or base units each one of them has its own intelligence service with its own security communications and support services while supposedly protecting us from foreign threats the various intelligence agencies spend a good deal of time policing and propagating views among the u.s public they have admitted they maintained surveillance on members of congress the white house the treasury and commerce departments they become a state within the state they've maintained surveillance on vast numbers of private citizens they have planted stories in the u s media to support their counter-insurgency view of the world secretly enlisting the cooperation of newspaper owners media network bosses and hundreds of journalists and editors the cia alone has subsidized the publication

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publication of hundreds of books and has owned outright more than 230 or so wire services newspapers magazines and book publishing complexes according to a senate intelligence committee report the cia has recruited some 5 000 academicians from across the country as spies and researchers secretly financing and censoring their work cia agents participate in academic conferences and the agency conducts its own resident scholar programs it even recruits students on the campus it offers internships and tuition assistance to undergraduate and graduate students while they're still attending school intelligence agencies have infiltrated and financed student labor scientific and peace groups the cia has financed research on mind control drugs sometimes on unsuspecting persons and was responsible for the death of at least one government employee in violation of the national security act of 1947 which says that the cia shall have no police subpoena law enforcement or internal security functions because congress was afraid of building up a secret military police in their own country it's okay for them to work that way in other countries but not here despite that stricture in that security act of 47 the agency has equipped and trained local police forces in the u.s under president reagan's executive order the cia was authorized to conduct domestic surveillance and covert operations against u.s citizens both in the united states and abroad and in fact you're listening to one of those citizens right now under the freedom of information act i got a file for my fbi and it had a whole section from the cia at least the cia told me they sent it to the fbi the order still in effect as of 1994 95 also authorizes intelligence agencies

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95 also authorizes intelligence agencies to train and support local police and enter secret contracts with corporations academic institutions other organizations and individuals for the provision of services and goods this is president reagan's executive order i'm talking about which president clinton is living with quite comfortably us intelligence agencies have perpetrated terrible crimes against the peoples of other nations in countries like guatemala greece brazil chile indonesia argentina zaire the philippines u.s national security forces have used military intervention terror sabotage bribery propaganda and assassination to bring down populist or democratically elected governments and install reactionary dictatorships friendly to u.s corporate interests countries that embarked upon popular revolutions such as nicaragua mozambique and angola found their economies and peoples devastated by the murderous assaults of u.s supported mercenary armies in angola over 1.5 million people have been killed in a cia-supported civil war against the progressive government of angola and its people the cia has sabotaged and stolen elections abroad the cia has waged massive disinformation campaigns infiltrated and fractured trade union movements of other nations it has funded and trained secret armies paramilitary forces torture squads and death squads and and the cia has pursued destabilization and assassination campaigns against labor peasant religious clergy and student organizations in numerous nations now these see these squads don't kill at random they kill those people who are in any way trying to better the lot of the poor against the privileges of the rich

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against the privileges of the rich after world war ii u.s intelligence agencies put thousands of nazi war criminals and their collaborators on the u.s payroll utilizing them in repressive operations against the left in latin america and elsewhere murderers far from being exempted from such protection seem to have been among those most likely to obtain this protection a network of eastern european fascists anti-semites racists and nazi collaborators found a home in the ethnic outreach program of the republican party george bush in fact in 1992 campaign had to get rid of a few of them when it finally made the national media u.s intelligence agencies have used mobsters drug dealers and warlords in their war against those who resist the encroachments of global corporatism the cia supplied arms and money to the italian and corsican mafias to beat and murder members of communist-led dock workers unions in italy and france after these unions were broken the mobsters and they were broken with terror and violence and murder the mobsters were given a freer hand in transporting tons of heroin each year from asia to western europe and north the cia buttressed anti-communist warlords in southeast asia and afghanistan whose opium production increased tenfold soon after the agency moved into these regions according to the washington post likewise cia involvement in

central america contributed to the u.s cocaine epidemic of the 1980s cia planes transported guns and supplies down to right-wing mercenary troops in nicaragua and pro-capitalist military leaders in other countries the planes then were reloaded with narcotics for the return trip to the united states

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for the return trip to the united states this by the way is a matter of public record and as a finding of at least three congressional investigative committees cia operatives participated with mafia associates and business and political leaders to profit from the multi-billion dollar savings and loan swindles monies gained from such deals along with drug money laundered through various banks and other financial institutions were illegally used to finance cia covert activities and line the park pockets of various people in the field there exists enormous evidence a mountain of evidence accumulated over 30 years suggesting that elements of the intelligence community assisted by certain mobsters were involved in the assassination of president john kennedy in 1963 and in the subsequent massive cover-up kennedy was considered a dangerous liability by the intelligence community and right-wing groups because of what were perceived as his liberal foreign and domestic policies including his unwillingness to pursue an all-out ground war in indochina and escalate the war his determination to bring the intelligence community under tighter controls and his other various policies his pursuit of a rapprochement with the soviet union was also another consideration which uh incurred the ire of right-wing groups if in fact there was no conspiracy why has there been so much cover-up why have the archives been sealed for 60 70 80 years and why so much official resistance against opening them if there's nothing to hide what are they hiding x-rays mrs kennedy's description of the wounds and the shots oswald's links with military intelligence even oswald's tax returns on and on and on ago

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ago in 1982 at the urging of the reagan administration congress passed a law that made it a crime to publish any information that might lead to the disclosure of the identities of present and past intelligence agents and informers even if the information came from already published sources what this means is that under the law some journalistic exposures of illegal covert activities themselves become illegal it's been argued that a strong intelligence system is needed to gather information for policy makers will be safer and more secure that way but the cia and some other agencies have been involved in something more than just gathering information they've been involved in covert actions that go beyond intelligence gathering and any lawful mandate they've been involved in economic and military sabotage disinformation campaigns directed against the u s public itself drug trafficking and mercenary wars assassinations and other terrorist acts against numerous nations and literally tens and hundreds of thousands of people let me quote what one former cia officer wrote his name ralph mcgehee in a book called deadly deceits quote my view backed by 25 years of experience is that quite simply that the cia is the covert action arm of the presidency much of its money manpower and energy go into covert operations that include backing dictators and overthrowing democratically elected governments the cia uses disinformation much of it aimed at the u.s public to mold opinion but if the agency actually reported the truth about the third world what would it say i'm still quoting mcgee he goes on he says it would say that the united

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he says it would say that the united states installs foreign leaders arms their armies and empowers their police to help these leaders repress an angry defiant people that the c i a empowered leaders represent only a small fraction who kill torture and impoverish their own people to maintain their position of privilege the cia plants weapons shipments forges documents broadcasts false propaganda and transforms reality thus it creates a new reality that it then believes unquote what we should do and what congress should do is abolish the cia and the entire national security state congress should drastically cut the budgets of national security agencies limit their mandates to intelligence gathering prohibit gangs to covert actions against third world social movements and impeach those executive officers who failed to obey the lawful limits imposed on them the power of the executive to act with criminally violent effect against various peoples throughout the

third world and throughout the world including our own people here at home this power should be exposed challenged and stopped the freedom of information act should be enforced instead of undermined by those who say they have nothing to hide then try to hide almost everything they do end the u.s sponsored counterinsurgency wars against the poor of the world we need to eliminate all foreign aid to regimes engaged in oppression of their own peoples the billions of u.s tax dollars that flow into the swiss bank accounts of foreign autocrats and militarists could be better spent on human services here at home lift the trade and travel bans imposed on cuba and other countries that have dared to deviate from the free market orthodoxy under the guise of fighting communism and quote protecting u.s interests the purveyors of state power have committed horrendous crimes against the people of this and other countries violating human

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and other countries violating human rights and the constitution in order to make the world safe for privilege and power the ancient question of political philosophy who guards the guardians remains with us the national security state continues to operate like a state within the state a law unto itself and it should be abolished in the name of democracy you heard the national security state at home and abroad part 6 of a 12-part series of commentaries by michael parente michael parente is the author of many books among them democracy for the few inventing reality against empire and dirty truths here is a brief preview of our next issue of radio democracy it's a widely accepted belief in this country that the press suffers from a liberal bias television pundits radio talk show hosts and political leaders help propagate this belief dissident media critics who think otherwise who maintain that the corporate owned press exercises a conservative grip on news and commentary such dissidents are allowed almost no exposure in the supposedly liberal media michael parente coming up on the next segment of radio democracy for a copy of this talk and one other by michael parente please send four dollars for one cassette and ask for part six the national security state at home and abroad for the entire 12-part series on six cassettes send twenty four dollars that's six cassettes for twenty four dollars to people's video audio post office box nine nine five four seattle washington 98199 usa that's people's video audio post office box 99514

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